

Application No.: 09/837,902

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Docket No.: 495152000110

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed on November 16, 2005, claims 110, 116-119, 139, 143-148 and 157-159 were rejected. By this Amendment, claims 110 and 139 have been amended. Applicant requests entry of the present Amendment and reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the following remarks.

Claims 110, 116-119, 139, 143-148, and 157-159 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese patent publication 4-311591 (the Hirohiko reference).

In the Office Action, the Examiner responded to Applicant's earlier remarks by asserting that the amendment to claims 110 and 139 reciting that "plating the film to the desired thickness on at least a second portion of the substrate/wafer ... after plating the film on the first portion of the substrate/wafer surface" does not preclude "deposition on the second portion while deposition is being carried out on the first portion." The Examiner further asserts, that "the expression 'desired thickness' is considered to include any thickness between the initial deposition thickness and the final thickness obtained at the end of the process."

First, Applicant notes that the Examiner's assertion relies on a scenario where the film in the Hirohiko reference is being plated non-uniformly. In particular, in order for one portion to be plated to a desired thickness while deposition is being carried out on another portion, presumably after the film has already reached that desired thickness, the two portions must be plated non-uniformly. This scenario, however, is contrary to the specific teachings of the Hirohiko reference. In particular, the stated purpose of the Hirohiko reference is, "[t]o obtain a plating film precisely uniform in film quality, composition and film thickness on a wafer..." (Emphasis added.) The Examiner has not explained how it is possible to: a) plate the entire surface of the wafer at one time; b) achieve a precisely uniform film thickness; and c) have different portions reaching different thickness at different times during the plating process.

Second, claims 110 and 139 have been amended to recite that "plating the film to the desired thickness on at least a second portion of the substrate/wafer surface" "after plating the film on the first portion of the substrate/wafer surface" produces "a film at the desired thickness on the first and

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second portions of the substrate/wafer surface." Note, in the scenario proposed by the Examiner, the film is never at the desired thickness on the first and second portions. In particular, in the scenario proposed by the Examiner, when one portion reaches the desired thickness, the thickness at the other portion is no longer at the desired thickness.

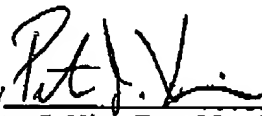
Finally, independent claim 157 recites, "applying plating current to plating electrodes for the first and second portions separately." The figure accompanying the Abstract of the Hirohiko reference depicts anodic electrode 4, 4...connected to a single power source 5. Thus, Applicant asserts that there is no teaching or suggestion in the Hirohiko reference to "applying plating current to plating electrodes for the first and second portions separately." (Emphasis added).

Thus, Applicant asserts that claims 110, 139, and 157 are allowable. Applicants also assert that claims 116-119, 143-148, and 158, 159 are allowable for at least the reason that they depend from allowable independent claims.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal form is separated from this document and/or the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing 495152000110. The Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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